

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 4408

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NL US UK UR PINT
SUBJECT: DUTCH ATTITUDE TOWARD SOVIET UNION

REF: (A) THE HAGUE 4065, (B) THE HAGUE 4118

1. DURING AN INITIAL CALL AUGUST 8 ON POLAK, DIRECTOR OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AT THE MFA, I ASKED ABOUT THE MEASURES THE DUTCH HAD TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THE SHCHARANSKY AND OTHER TRIALS. POLAK SEEMED TO WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO "CLARIFY" THE POSITION.

2. REPORTS WHICH APPEARED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SHCHARANSKY TRIAL OF THE STEPS THE DUTCH INTENDED WERE NOT ENTIRELY ACCURATE, HE EXPLAINED. THE DUTCH HAD NEVER HAD ANY INTENTION OF RUPTURING THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS A RESULT OF THE TRIALS. THE CURRENT SITUATION COULD BEST BE DESCRIBED AS A "PAUSE FOR REFLECTION" BY THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT, A PAUSE WHICH WOULD ALLOW THE GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE WHAT IF ANY FURTHER STEPS IT MIGHT WISH TO TAKE ON THE OFFICIAL LEVEL.
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POLAK EMPHASIZED THAT THIS PAUSE ONLY APPLIED TO OFFICIAL CONTACTS; BUSINESS, CULTURAL AND OTHER CONTACTS ARE CONTINUING AND THERE IS NO INTENTION OF STOPPING THEM.

3. I ASKED HOW LONG HE ESTIMATED THIS "PAUSE" WOULD LAST. POLAK SAID HE DID NOT KNOW. FOR ONE

THING MOST OF THE MINISTERS WHOSE DECISION WOULD BE
REQUIRED BEFORE THERE WAS ANY CHANGE WERE ON VACATION.
WAS IT LIKELY, I ASKED, THAT THE DUTCH POSITION
(OR ANY CHANGE IN IT) WOULD BE REFLECTED IN THE QUEEN'S
SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT IN MID-SEPTEMBER?
POLAK SAID THIS WAS A POSSIBILITY. WAS THERE ANY
FEELING THAT THE DUTCH HAD GOTTEN OUT TOO FAR AHEAD OF
THEIR ALLIES ON THIS ISSUE? IN OBLIQUE REPLY,
POLAK SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED THAT THE NETHERLANDS POSITION
WAS ROUGHLY IN LINE WITH THE POSITION OF THE US AND
UK. MY COMMENT WAS THAT IT WAS ALWAYS GOOD TO FIND THE
US LINED UP WITH THE NETHERLANDS ON AN ISSUE OF
THIS SORT.

4. COMMENT: POLAK' REMARKS SERVE TO CONFIRM THE
ACCURACY OF THE "TROUW" VERSION OF THE MFA POSITION
(THE HAGUE 4065, PARA 2) AND REINFORCE THE POINTS MADE
BY VAN GORP (PARA 3). TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE STATEMENTS
INDICATE A CLEAR MFA DESIRE TO PLAY DOWN THE CONCEPT OF ANY
CONFRONTATION WITH THE USSR OR ANY FURTHER OFFICIAL
STEPS WHICH MIGHT LEAVE THE DUTCH IN WHAT THEY WOULD
CONSIDER AN EXPOSED POSITION.
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